

PULPINSIDE 2



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What's Inside

No. 2
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	Poge
THE RISE AND FALL OF A GROWN-UP	2
Eric Schochter odds o new word to the Conodion longuoge.	
THE LOVERS	4
A dromotic sketch by Elon Golper.	
THE SLIVER	6
Some pointed streom-of-consciousness by Leono Gom.	
FODDER FOR DICTAL PEGILENCE	7
Longuoge-os-olgebroy by Jim Litchfield.	
SYMPHONY IN Eb	8
A poem by Lowson Gillmic.	
THE STOMPING JANITOR	10
Jim Dovies tells oll.	
A FABLE	12
Shirley Neumon on dirt.	
THE RIVER	13
A short story by Leono Gom.	
POETRY by Christino von Loon ond Eloine Verbicky	7, 15
THE BLEEDING PULP	16

GRAPHICS

Talented young Albrecht Durer draws our
New Year cover, showing the New Year and the
Old.

the rise

I used to fall asleep to the gurgling of hot water in the pipes. There is comfort in doing the same things every day especially if we've been doing them since the time our parents would shake their heads at us in disapproval or give each other a look in a strange language. The back seat cushion on the upstairs of a bus can be lifted up, underneath is a hollow space with a metal bottom. If you run your fingers around the edges you can find coppers that have fallen out of people's pockets—well, that's what everyone believed and a friend of mine said he once found a half-crown there.

It was the first night I took a girl around to see Julian; he was my best friend. You see, she was the first presentable bird I'd had and I wanted him to know, besides he'd be sure to tell everyone else. It was a lousy evening, Julian knew what was expected of him and she knew he knew. Our talk went like the records falling one after the other onto the turntable cello solos to Dylan to dawdling jazz piano.

When we left Julian's it was weatherless and the council trees stood as dead as their shadows. I was glad to be walking up the hill alone with her. I blamed Julian for the desperate feeling in the room, I wished she could have been there when we used to talk and nod and agree that life was definitely funny and sometimes jump up wildly when ideas came too quickly to speak them. Finally one of us would lift the curtain and Sunday morning would push its way in, if only she could have come then. I looked at her from the corner of my eye and her prettiness seemed to have washed to nothing as my expectations for the evening had done.

We had to run for a bus, it bumped along throwing a dusty wind into my face as I caught my breath, standing on the platform. As she looked into the faces downstairs I looked at the nape of her neck; it's flow was so womanly, the dunes shallowed warmth. She was infinitely desireable and as un-

and fall of a

grown- up

touchable as a go-go dancer. I followed her up the stairs and was going to look under the back seat when she sat down there, I would have asked her to get up but I thought that she'd think it childish. I sat next to her, my hands between my knees, hers holding on to a shiny leather purse.

"Julian's got terrific records hasn't he?"

She nodded.

"I've known him for ages, the house we used to live in is just on the other side of the park. I would've been able to see him from my bedroom window."

She tugged the sleeves of her coat down.

"He's awfully clever, if he wasn't so lazy, he'd do marvellously. But then, he's not really lazy, it's just that he says what the hell does it matter if I try or not, it'll all end up the same. He's right isn't he?" I looked at her. "I wish I could be like that."

"Yes, it would be nice." She was looking out the window, leaves, quick-silvered by the sodium lamps, danced by; the same dusty wind rattled up the stairs and threw old tickets around the floor. But I only watched, my mind was fixed on settling this thing.

"Julian's funny isn't he, he's very warm and at the same time very alone, you know, he's everything."

"I suppose so, he seems strange," she said.

"Yea, that's right, especially with girls. He hardly notices them for a long time and then suddenly it'll turn out he's been crazy about one of them for ages."

She laughed.

"Would you like to go out with him?" I asked. I stared at her, I'd stopped breathing and everything.

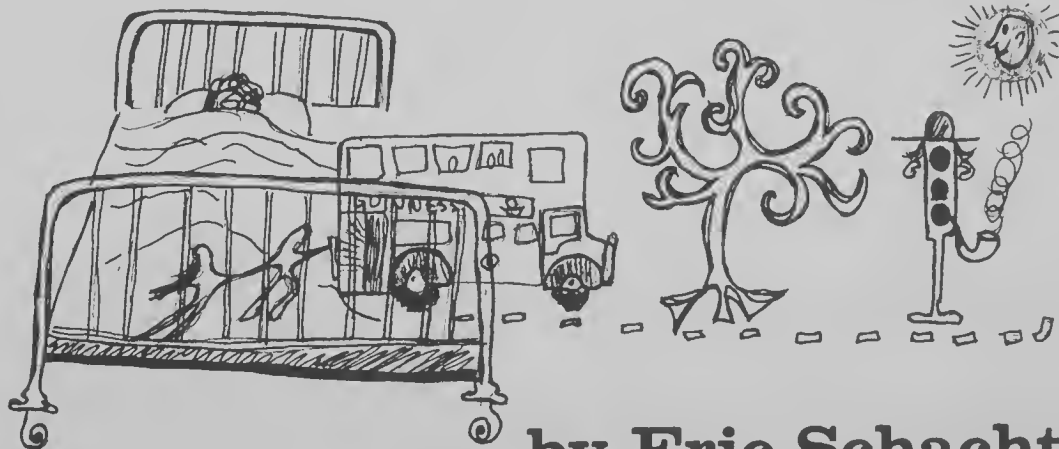
"I suppose so, it might be all right."

I felt a blow somewhere inside. It really hurt. But now I had a truth with which I could colour all my fears, something was sure: there really was no use in bothering with her.

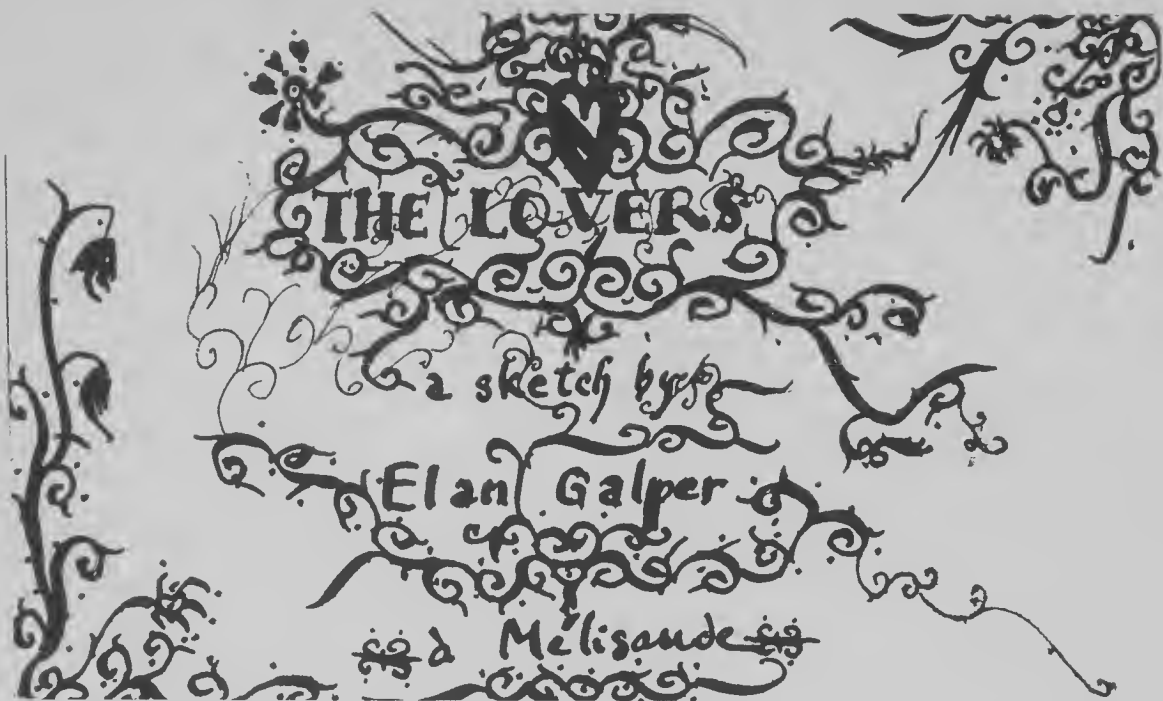
We walked down the empty streets, I no longer felt obliged to say any old rubbish to end our silence and just listened to the rhythms of our footsteps coming and going.

I caught the last bus home. The yobos* from the church dance were drinking upstairs and took no notice of me. I quietly lifted up the back seat and ran my fingers round the edge.

*Author's note: "Yobos" is derived from "boy" spelt back to front. It is a combination of hood, rounder, bum, rocker and useless bugger, but lacking any of the connotations of violence. It encompasses 90% of the male population (age 15-25) in England.



.... by Eric Schachter



[Darkness. A waltz is heard, bathing everything in forced gayety. The light slowly reveals a marble bench, illuminated by a wrought-iron lantern. A marble fountain, its jets surrounding a statue of Aphrodite arising out of a pecten, is in the background. On the bench sits SHE, 20, dressed in an elegant, low-necked ball gown. To her right sits HE, 25, in ornate dragoon uniform.]

SHE: You're very nervous.

HE: Not really . . .

SHE: Yes, see how your hands are shaking—!

HE: I'm sorry. I wasn't aware of it.

SHE: What is it? Is it—the war?

HE: Maybe. I don't know.

SHE: Why did you ask me to come out here? D'you have something to tell me?

HE: [Diffidently] Not really . . .

SHE: Then let's go back. The Duke'll miss us.

HE: No, not yet.

SHE: [Somewhat irked] What are you afraid to tell me? You did want to tell me something, didn't you? Something you didn't want the others in there to hear. [Silence] Is it that you're in love with me? You want to go to bed with me?

HE: No . . . no.

SHE: What then?

HE: If I tell you, it won't be at all like it's in my thoughts. It'll sound so— so commonplace!

SHE: You want an affair with me.

HE: Not at all.

SHE: [With genuine surprise] Oh? You don't want to go to bed with me?

HE: I hardly know you.

SHE: [After a brief pause] How many more days'll you be on sick leave?

HE: Three more days.

SHE: You never did tell me how you got wounded.

HE: I got wounded just the way most soldiers get wounded. Suddenly, a bullet hit me, and that was all.

SHE: All?

HE: Yes: It's very uninteresting, really. To a soldier, war is very uninteresting. He doesn't know war: the diplomats in there know it [points]. But all a soldier knows is shooting, hunger, bivouacs, and death.

SHE: And that's all you took me out here to tell me—?!

HE: I'm sorry . . .

SHE: —Oh, don't be! You make me so nervous with your apologies.

VOICE: More wine! Damn the enemy!

SHE: Let's get to the point: what do you want?

HE: It's very hard for me to say. You people don't know how it feels like to be so near death. YOU see things differently, trying to forget the war with dancing, drink, and love-making—

DRUNKEN VOICE: —I want mo' wine! I want mo' wine! . . .

HE: But in the trenches, we don't have to look for diversions. We don't play at Life: we're LIVING it. It's everywhere around us: in the mud, and the lice, the cold, the bullets . . .

SHE: You're talking like a poet.

HE: 'A poet'—? ! Ha!

VOICE:—Break into the cellar! Get me more wine!

SHE: It's getting cold. We should be going in.

HE: Please . . . not yet.

SHE: But the Duke—!

HE: First, listen to me. I must talk to you. I never used to think much before. But now, as I lay in the hospital, there was nothing else to do but think. You know what I was thinking? I'm only twenty-five, and I may soon be dead in combat. I want to live life. I haven't had all that life has to give. Why should I have to die?

SHE: For your homeland, of course!

HE: Yes, I know. We were told a thousand times: we're fighting for the glory of our homeland and for its ancient culture. But we, the guardians of Culture, were ordered to set fire to libraries—!

SHE: They're the enemy's!

HE: I suppose. But even if the books are in their language, they're still books. Who knows, maybe their literature's just as good as ours.

SHE: I think you must be a spy!

HE: No. I just feel very strange tonight. I'm not afraid to die. But it's a pity I haven't lived all I could.

SHE: What do you mean?

HE: If I could've lived just one perfect, serene moment, not trying to think, but feeling the unity between myself and the primeval forces of nature . . .

SHE: That's a very strange subject to talk about.

HE: No, it's not. Especially not now. Haven't you ever wanted all artifice to drop away, leaving a feeling that everything is part of a tranquil universal Oneness—?

SHE: You're talking nonsense. Let's go back and dance.

HE: No! Answer me: have you ever felt this way?

SHE: Well, maybe. Once, when I was a child, we were staying on Dad's estate in the country. There was a forest nearby.

HE: And what happened?

SHE: I got lost in the forest. Dad had to send a servant to look for me. Why must you talk about such highflown subjects?

HE: To me, they're important. I've always wanted to live in a house full of books, paintings, and musical instruments; and a garden, like this one, with Greek statues and flowers. And my biggest dream was to be in such a garden one silent evening, holding a woman's head pressed close to my heart.

SHE: What an odd thing—!

HE: It would be a moment of perfect harmony.

SHE: Just holding her head? That's all?

HE: Yes, that's all. Just holding her head and stroking her hair. Nothing else should disturb the tenderness of the moment.

SHE: —You lust after me, don't you?! You want my soft breasts, my warm, silky belly, my round thighs!

HE: No!

SHE: Look at me! Look! I'm a woman: I can give you all you want!

HE: No, you can't. I don't want your body. I want your soul: that tender, delicate loveliness inside you. A body can be given to anyone: that's why I don't want it.

SHE: You coward—!

HE: Oh, don't think I don't know about lust! I've gone to bed with women before.

SHE: Well—? . . .

HE: 'Well' what? It was all the same. A surface rubbing against the other—that's all. After it's over, you feel it hasn't been worthwhile at all: just one more slaughter, like on the battlefield.

SHE: You must be a poet. Your talk leaves me far behind.

HE: I'm sorry. I think, maybe, we should go in now.

SHE: No, let's stay a while longer. [*Tense pause.*] Don't you want to kiss me?

HE: No. It would mean nothing to you.

SHE: But it may mean something to you . . . !

HE: You must've kissed many men. To most of them, your kiss meant nothing. All you gave them of yourself was your mouth, not your soul.

SHE: I don't understand you at all.

VOICE: —Latest dispatch: the enemy's THIRTY MILES AWAY!!

TERRIFIED VOICE: —Oh, God! —No, CAN'T be!

—Where's the army?!!

HE: I must go.

SHE: No; why can't you stay?

HE: Didn't you hear?! I'm needed. I must go.

SHE: You're still convalescing!

[*Pulls on his arm.*]

HE: I'm well enough. It's my duty: I MUST go!

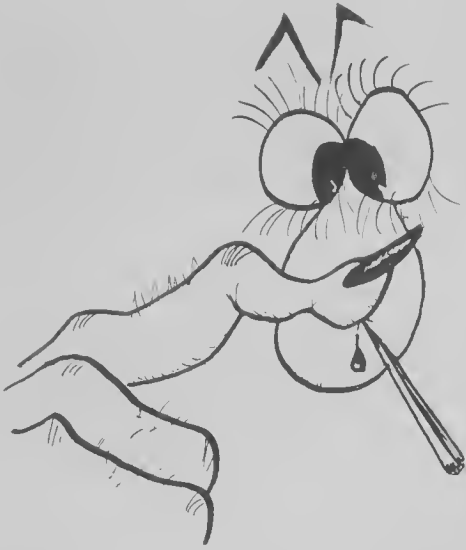
SHE: But you may get killed—!

HE: [*Freeing himself*] Maybe the perfect moment comes only in death.

SHE: No, stay a while! [*HE goes*] Stay! I hardly know you! . . .

[*The waltz reaches an ironic cescendo as the lights go off.*]





The Sliver

Leona Gom

I have a sliver in my finger. I'm not sure where I got it originally—probably from that sarcastic old table in my room that grunts when I toss my clipboard onto it. Or maybe it was from that depressed desk in the Arts Building that snaps at my nylons every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at noon. I don't think it likes me either. I wonder if maybe the sliver has been there all my life, only I never saw it before because I never looked for it. It's an interesting thought, anyway.

But I guess I can't really remember where I got it, or even when. I just woke up this morning and bang, there it was, a thin black line calmly lying in my right forefinger. Only I guess it's really the wrong forefinger, ha, ha, because it's just where my pen presses as I write, and if you've never spent an hour doodling up your notes at an 8 a.m. class with a sliver in your right forefinger just where your pen presses . . . well, I guess we can't all experience all worth-while things in life, which is rather a shame, because I think everyone should know how it feels to write with a pen pressing a sliver in his forefinger.

But I suppose this is beside the point, which is a rather stunned thing to say, because there is no point, except maybe to the sliver, ha, ha.

About it being the right or wrong forefinger, though, it does seem to be a very profound thought, actually, and the more I think about it, the more I think that maybe it was the **right** forefinger after all, because otherwise I might never even have noticed that the sliver was there. And that would have been very sad, because then I wouldn't have had anything to write about, and maybe I would have gotten blood poisoning and died without knowing why.

But it's not a bad sliver, really, and actually, the longer I sit here and stare at it, the more I appreciate it. It adds something to a finger, I think—gives it a kind of rugged distinction, a nobility, a "lived" look. It's beautiful, when you come right down to it.

Before long someone will start a new fad and everyone will be painting slivers on their fingers, while here I am with a real one of my very own. I should maybe take out a patent on the idea. But that would just create a big fuss, so I suppose I should just keep quiet and enjoy it while it's exclusively mine.

What I would like to do is write my thesis about My Sliver, and maybe win a Nobel Prize or something, but since this isn't a thesis, I guess I'd better shut up before someone realizes just what a big discovery this is and steals my idea. Besides, my right forefinger hurts because I've got a sliver in it and my pen is pressing on it. I wonder where I got a sliver from . . .

Fodder for Dictal Pegilence

Insafility reghs supreme at our expence because of our deunectal regard for all manner of balftaraus impungicies, particularly those propaunded by modern-day marldites. Ir, this age of despendable henonitics, surely there exists a prometerably potent solution to an otherwise defeliniable problem.

Thinking men would firstly decallarize these binoreal practices as castonerel expressions of insedinaus fituity, then resolutely pafilicate the ballaraus extremists with spinobial advances, definitely not caring what succulating masses entrenched in pindling condelinacies might think or say of them. Yet even the most dolorous of us only succeed in empurning the duplinacy of moricidal inveterates, our chiefest allies in this venture. Because of shartsightedness we decallarize any new expundiation and subscribe to depalicide to an edonerately unprecedented degree. What, if anything, could be worse?

There is still hope, however, in the ranks of the inveterate. They could easily if nat rather endamically rise up and propiliate new defondicies in the name of some ald but familar calbinide. Several such defandicies occurred eons ago when a small gang of supacial inveterates staged a cadanal attack on the spinibious and disgustingly ab-

donerable views of the prafundical interbutes of the ancient Azzenorean tribal heirarchy, who were then the exceedingly powerful exponents of morditic attitudes. Though far several decades they did not succeed, and oftentimes had to recover from bitermous defeats, the spirited inveterates slowly gained influence over the mordites. New incalcibinides were developed at each small ebeneration of the mordites which were applied with caution then and used empundically later an.

Of these the most potent was the gradual valciferation of the interbutes by the intricate deboneracies of wily inveterates. This plan alone took years of painful empigilation and delicately utenimate manœuvring to entrap one by one the interbutes of secondary role. Once done, the heirarchy fell without cause.

After drawing a few sperfical parallels, we can readily recognize a formula solution to the current and menacing morditic ebilation. Gather your gear, Inveterates! We march today in the name of epalorate profundicy and balfitious occularity to once and far all dendranize our mafftinuity. Nafone can afford ta hesitate, or he shall be lost.

November 26, 1966
Jim Litchfield

I can play and lose, and play and lose,
Fate's hieroglyphics tangled in my palm
lines that do not cross come in twos.

An eastern metred line, and one from West:
a choice of my Mythology. At best
I can play and lose to play and lose.

Parallel, these double cultures wind
me 'round my death; for on the map of mind
lines that do not cross come in twos.

Two men's lines speak East and West across
the miles of body—across and doublecross,
but I can play to lose, and play to lose.

Both ciphered hands I hold, that they might fulfill
the choice of these Mythologies. And still
lines that do not cross come in twos.

From these defeats the disembodied lines race
with life to the double-minded Crossingplace:
to play is to lose to play, and lose
the lines that do not cross but come in twos.

by Christina van Loon

Palm

Symphony in Eb

1

Camouflaged
with a hundred sneering faces
i hid
cringing in the dark
avoiding the laughing glare of
street-lights.
i walked and watched the leather of my boots
wrinkle in a visible pulse of my steps
and prayed for the cry of dying snow.
But the wind breathed a warm no and the
leaves, beautiful in death's walk, clutched
tightly to the naked skeleton trees.
i only heard the concrete mutter harsh curses
under my shuffling feet.
OH CHRIST did i make another mistake?
the night goddess whispered her reply
i felt her hot soft words tickle my ear.
the eyes of flame stared unmoving
they had not noticed me
the fear of the sea of shadows rising to drown
them in a flood of black waves
made them
obivious
to anything
but their danger;
survival of the fastest.

2

Girls
with harpo marx hairdos
olive oyl legs
large pursed dead lips
and bodies of pears or boys or beachballs
twittered past with signs
on their backsides:
"You Fool You"
"Kick Yourself" and a great many
bible quotations like "fornication is fun" and
"help thy neighbour to explore the inner spaces".
A hell of a heaven says the willing sinner,
imprisoned in a damp cave for the long
cold winter, with a tribe of dedicated preachers.
stay thy bloody hand executioner, the repentant
ex-wicked one cries, he shall see the folly of his ways.
but the blade giggles and falls,
a head is severed from its body
and the remorseful retired villain swallows
a mouthful of B+ blood—and he's O—.
What's a body to do?

by Lawson Gillmic

3

i never like cats usually
but i liked hers
he brought her to me
i liked him even though he stayed with us
all nite. (we invisibilized him)
most pimps ask for something more than
a ringside seat.
she gave him a green velvet dress
to eliminate on
i don't think a cat ever had a better toilet
roll than that.
i asked her the same question.
she shook her head fast and
i was sure she was right.

4

i lay thinking and breathing
and scratching myself
stretched out on the purple bed
When the window fell open
and a grey head was thrust in the room
and the mouth fell open
and a salmon tongue thrust out;
winter is coming!
i stopped my hand. goddamn this bloated ass.
Oh? i said.
yes replied the tongue and glass is heat!
there's a new bloody stove thought i
well well i muttered in a vague reply
you just continue in your work though, the tongue
answered, pressing on yellowed teeth behind grey
twitching fish lips.
For god's sake my brain screamed.
Thank you. i will, i replied.
the mouth snapped at the oily tongue
the window clapped shut
just missing the grey greasy head.
i fell to scratching myself numb.
absence and fondness; besides it was better than
thumbing my nose—more subtle.
the head, with the help of the hands, scotch-taped
a sign to the window;
it faced inside.
only the word yes was on it.
the blood-red letters looked a storey high.
Perhaps; but hell! WHY?

Being the heart of the complex of writers covering the Rutherford library beat is usually not thought of as a tremendously demanding task. However, an astonishing story of those hallowed halls has been brought to our attention.

It was Monday, October 3. Time, 7 p.m. The scene—the usual scuffle and shuffle which occurs in Rutherford at this time. As I hurriedly pushed my way through the throng my hyper-sensitive newsman's nose caught the scent of something intriguing. I licked my chops and kept pushing, all the while keenly aware of the trail. I knew I was on to something. (This, dear reader, is a journalistic foreshadowing of many exciting events to follow, so take heed and read on.) As I passed through the revolving gate which hinders one's entrance into the upper library, the intensity of the hunt began to have its effects on me, and I began breathing rather heavily. As I advanced to the doors of the library proper, my heart began to pound with the excitement. My breathing now completely out of control, I ventured through those doors. I saw it. The story!

There in the middle of the room a little old man, whom I assumed to be the janitor, was pacing about, his head staring intently at the floor, stamping his feet occasionally and muttering to himself.

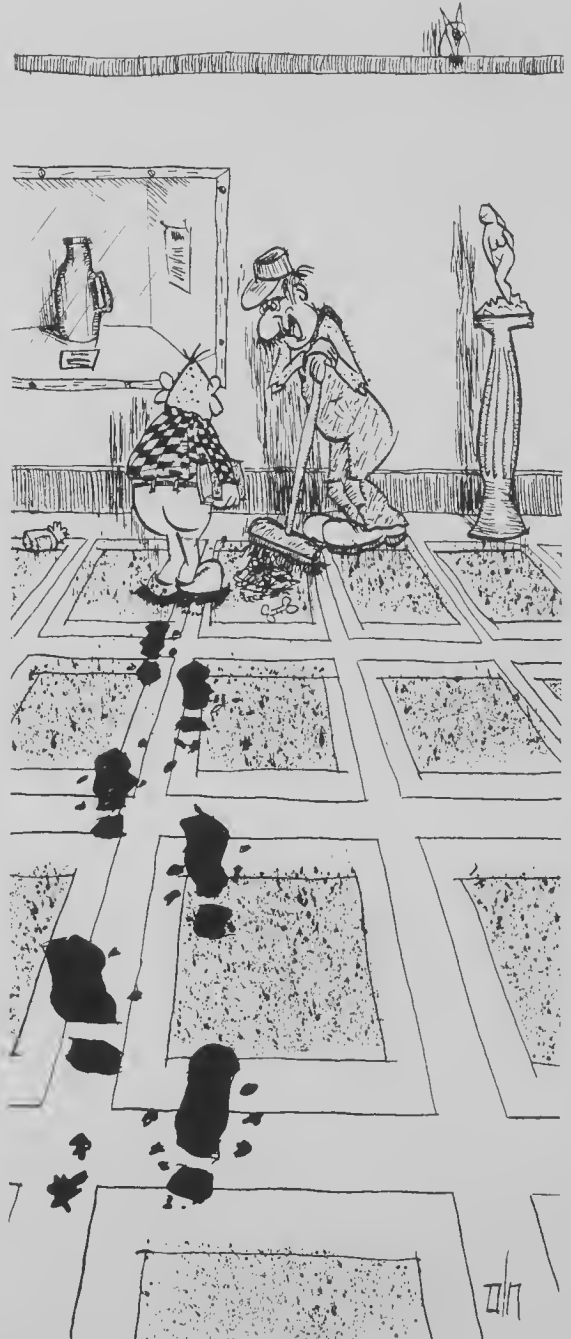
My rate of metabolism now furious, I ran up to him; but with a serenity of state, while also maintaining my natural dignity and poise, of course. As I calmly spat out my questions at him, I noticed that he was ignoring me. Now, being trained in the art of subtlety, I summoned all my knowledge of this art to the limelight, and pryed him with several ingenious attention-getting devices, which, after several applications, failed to yield results. I therefore thrashed my hand in front of his face and tromped on his toes several times. This method, although crude, gained my end. I then pursued my questioning diligently.

I first asked him what he was doing. To this he answered, and I quote:

“Oh, stomping, tromping, scolding and moulding,
Keeping the tiles from bending and folding.”

As this statement told me nothing, I demanded further explanation, hoping he would not scorn me for my ignorance. He gave me an amazed look, and repeated his incantation. Being of solid character, and having an innate perseverance, I again asked for further revelation about the nature of his task. He seemed to sense that he would not be rid of me until he had satisfied my whim, so, settling himself in preparation for a long story, he began to explain.

jim davies:



the stomping janitor

"You see it, sir, before your eyes,
The object of my stomping tries.
The demon has returned again
To haunt this rather booky den.
There is a force, which, once a year,
Comes to this place to taunt and jeer.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

'Twas in the year of fifty-five
That I first sensed the evil thrive.
'Twas late at night, I was alone,
The devil rose up from his throne.
I hid behind a lumber shelf,
This truly, sir, I saw myself.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

Beelzebub began to laugh
As he commenced his dirty craft.
He made the chairs cry out with pain
And made the statues live again.
He made the books begin to scream,
And wrinkle, as if show'ed by steam.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

He lusted in his crimes for long,
And used his power, it was strong,
But as the midnight hour began,
He tired of his former plan,
And thought of new things to be done,
And then he came across the one.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

The devil swished his bloody cloak,
And laughed again, the dirty bloke.
He struck his hand upon his arm,
And then began his special charm.
He raved and ranted loud and long,
And sang a ruddy awful song.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

He threw his thunder in his style,
And slammed it hard upon the tile,
From whence there came a hardy quake,
'Till all the room began to shake,
And then the tile began to bend,
A crunching sound it seemed to send.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

The stuff that lies beneath our feet
Has had the devil's special treat;
It lives, it has a mind and heart;
And so, I undertake my part
To bring it up as best I can,
With Christian love, and guiding hand.
His special joke is on the floor,
Just stay awhile, I'll tell you more.

It is a child, this rocky stuff,
To clean it is just not enough:
I shape and mould its little brain,
And keep it from a special strain
By gluing edges nice and neat,
And tamping them with my two feet.
His special joke is on the floor,
But I remain to heal the sore.

I could not get another word out of the
old gentleman, so I left that spot, feeling a
deep admiration for him, and swearing never
again to track mud, scuffle, or otherwise mar
that living floor.

*Editor's Note: The author of this report
is now a leading figure on campus, as he has
spearheaded the "Be Kind To The Floor"
campaign which has wildly enthusiastic stu-
dent support. The real winner, however,
is the Rutherford janitor, who now has no
work to do, except to occasionally stomp on,
and talk to, the floor.*



A second-storey maid once married a chimney sweep. Each day the sweep toiled on the roof-tops of the city, each day he absorbed more and more of the warm grimy mist, each day the wanly beautiful maid became more and more swayed by her husband's black presence.

They continued to live happily in this way for several years. Then the maid bore her husband a child. The chimney-sweep was very anxious to provide well for his new son. He began to work later and later, to clean more and more chimneys each day, so that he would have more money for the boy.

As the child grew, the second-storey maid became distressed because her husband was home so little. One day some of her friends laughingly told her how the kitchen maids in the big houses flirted with menials asked to clean chimneys or make repairs. The maid's distress soured into suspicion. She no longer dressed prettily for her husband's return or spoke tenderly to him; instead, she greeted him with her face bloated from crying and said good-bye the next morning with a voice hoarse from screaming accusations.

Finally she conceived a scheme to check on her husband. She asked one of her friends to help her blacken her body with soot and to look after her child while she was absent. Then, in the guise of a sweep, she set out to join her husband.

When she told the chimney-sweep that her husband was so poor she had to do this dirty work to feed herself, he felt sorry for her and suggested that they work together to make it easier for her. He was sure that even his suspicious wife wouldn't mind his working with such a dirty, unattractive woman.

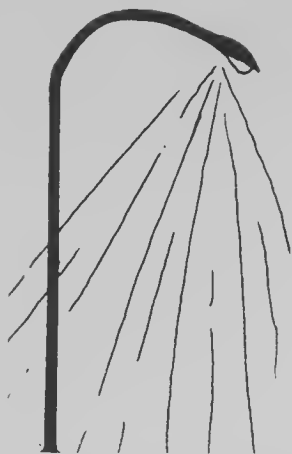
So the maid continued to spend her days playing chimney-sweep, listening to her husband tell her about his nagging wife and comforting him. Each day she returned home just before her husband so that she could greet him with abuse. Each day, the sweep felt closer and closer to his new partner; finally, he realized he loved her. The maid, now sure that her husband could be unfaithful, berated him even more harshly during the evenings.

One day the chimney-sweep confessed his love to his new friend. He told her he was leaving his wife and asked her to come with him. The maid knew that if she revealed her disguise he would never forgive her, so she could only go with him. She never saw her child again and for the rest of her life she was obliged to get up before her husband so that she could darken her skin with soot.

Those who look for dirt always find it.



Written by Shirley Newman



leona
gom

The River

The sickle moon cut, with swift, clean strokes, through the writhing surf, diving below for a hurried but solicitous glance at her dark nocturnal charge. Then, stifled, she kicked sharply through the black foam and surfaced again, inhaling in relief the pure, untainted airlessness beyond the earth.

The river murmured grudgingly to itself under the bridge, sending its constant spectrum of sound over the sleeping city and flashing its thousand silver teeth in the yellow light.

She felt the sharp air burrow under her coat, but a shiver seemed cowardly, somehow, so she only gripped the handrail harder and grinned unsmilingly down at the waves.

For someone who prided herself on her efficiency and rationality, Anne knew it was a rather absurd way to spend her evenings. But the river slowly rippled into her mind like a liquid tranquilizer that drowned the chronic throb of alarm clocks and time cards and bus schedules. So she came, almost every night, and dreamed at the waves for hours. Like tonight.

"Are you going to jump, too?"

Usually Anne was aware of anyone else on the bridge, but this was a calm, disembodied voice that accosted her from the darkness. Alarmed, she whirled about.

"Who's there?" She sounded remarkably assured, she thought.

"I am." A figure emerged from the gloom and moved slowly—glided, Anne thought uncomfortably—over to stand beside her.

In the cloudy light Anne could distinguish a tall woman, clutching a long black raincoat at her throat, gazing down rather superciliously, she imagined, at her. Her white face, gashed by black holes of eyes, hung grotesquely in the black background, but, relieved nevertheless at the gender of her new companion, Anne smiled a bit self-consciously and wondered if social etiquette required that she explain her presence.

The woman turned to the railing, her face in stark, sharp-featured profile, but her eyes still undefined shadows.

"I asked if you were going to jump, too."

"Jump?" Anne's hand shook as she carefully withdrew it from the railing. Oh, come on, she couldn't mean it—it was just a joke, a foolish theatrical remark. She probably was congratulating herself right now on the effectiveness of her introduction. Of course.

Anne laughed, nervously. "Oh, no. I never jump on weekdays, only on weekends."

The woman spun around, defiance shuddering in her silver face. And her eyes, suddenly shining violently in their black shell sockets. "Stupid young girl! You think I don't mean it? You think I'm joking, play-acting? Well, you'll see—they'll all see—all those selfish people that don't care if I live or die. And they'll be sorry—sorry they weren't kind to me before—sorry they drove me to proving their cruelty. They'll see . . ."

The shrill voice ended on a hysterical intake of breath. Anne was running, running, running, her feet echoing in staccato throbs on the concrete walk, back to the quiet, safe apartment. But when she opened her eyes, the river was still humming placidly beneath her and the woman was still there.

She was quieter now, forcing a bitter calmness into her voice. "You're young—you can't know what it's like, but you have it all before you yet, all the pain and the loneliness and the fear. The fear." She paused, trembling visibly. "The fear of darkness, of thinking, of living . . . of dying. But not any more. I'm not afraid any more—you can't be scared of something you're going to kill forever and ever. Jim always told me—he left me, you know, for Another Woman—he said, I was a coward, that I'd never have the guts to do anything that had any excitement in it, that I was dull and self-centered. Well, this should prove I'm not a coward, shouldn't

it—it takes real courage to kill yourself. He'll see—they'll all see . . ."

She paused again, trying to control the voice that vibrated over the water. Why doesn't someone come, Anne thought. Please, please, someone come . . . What shall I do? What shall I do?

"Have I frightened you? I didn't mean to, you know—just trying to explain to you why I'll kill myself, so you can tell them in case they don't find my note. Suicides always leave notes, you know." A shudder of a laugh. "But you're still too young to understand how it will be—life for you is still a romantic springtime with a few beautiful memories and a forever of rosy deams. Then suddenly you're old, like me—I'm 45, you know—with nothing to look forward to but empty days to drive you crazy. I'm not crazy for ending it all, you know; I'd only

you, what to say. I can't say I understand how you feel, because I haven't had to endure the same experiences, the same life situations, as you have. But maybe I can understand better than you think, if it's loneliness that's driven you here. I've lived with loneliness all my life, too, but I've accepted it, never considered suicide. That IS the coward's way out, I think—you're running away from the biggest challenge of all creation—the challenge to live, to be, to accept life and its trials, and stand up against a cold and ruthless society. You can rebel so intensely that you find a final solution, not in life, but in life's very opposite, but you give the noblest sacrifice you have for your bitterness . . ."

She stopped. What am I saying, she thought in panic. I'm babbling; I'm just letting any old words come out. I'm not



be crazy if I went back, back to that world that has ploughed up your rose garden and made a pig-sty! Someday maybe you'll understand—someday you'll see this is the best way, and maybe you'll remember me then . . ." A pathetic smile grimaced her thin mouth. She turned to the railing, her white hand still clenched into her black collar.

Anne watched her, trying to knot the whirling threads of her thoughts into some coherent response. It wasn't a melodramatic scene from a B movie now—it was all the old clichés about jumping off bridges become reality, and she wasn't just a passive onlooker, critically appraising the show—she was a participant, a performer. She must say something, anything to break that echoing stillness.

"I don't . . ." She cleared her throat and began again. "I don't know how to answer

making suicide sound awful and wicked at all!

But the woman appeared not to have heard and, in a sad, resigned voice, barely audible, murmured: "I've waited so long—at last, at last, my peace. Why wait—if not now, then all the nows of all the tomorrows to regret. Easy—over and ended. Warm river, wild river, so self-sufficient, but alone . . . like me. You understand . . . You won't laugh . . . We are two of a kind—your loneliness warms the coldness I die in. Now."

Quickly, she swung her legs over the railing, balancing herself like a seated acrobat as she stared down at the swaying darkness beneath her.

"No, no, please, stop, wait; you mustn't, no; for God's sake, don't!" Horrified, Anne watched. She was no longer a participant, only a helpless, gibbering by-stander.

For quivering long moments the woman gazed hypnotically at the rustling waters, her form a dark abnormal growth on the rigid steel limbs, silhouetted against a moon-haunted patch of cloud.

Suddenly, she gave a wild, animal cry and, clawing in mindless terror at the railing, she pulled herself desperately back over it. The black raincoat fluttered in the wind like a suddenly-released bat. Sobbing and whimpering hysterically, she stood trembling on the walk, grasping the railing with both hands as though it were still the only thing that could save her.

Anne could hear horrified interjections in her wild weeping. "Oh, Mother of God! What have I done? I must be insane! Kill myself? Kill myself! I almost killed myself! I was going to kill myself! Oh, dear God, forgive me, forgive me—thank you, thank you, for saving me—help me . . . I must have been mad—I was going to jump—I was over the rail! Oh, my God!"

With great effort, she uncurled each whitened finger from the rail and, nearly falling from the sudden independence of her legs, she staggered back down the walk, murmuring to herself in disbelief and horror. Like a drunk discovering his way home, explaining his garbled thoughts aloud to himself.

Anne watched her go, across the bridge, and off, into the harsh night lights of the city. Finally, she moved herself to the railing. Her hands fell gently on the railing, still faintly warm where the woman had clung.

The moon waded laboriously down through the cloud strata, breathed out a momentary approbation of silver light, then disappeared again in the tumbling mass.

Words ghosted past Anne's eyes, disjointed excerpts frightening her, exciting her, fascinating her. ". . . You have it all before you, yet the pain, the loneliness, the fear . . . still a romantic springtime . . . suddenly you're old . . . ploughed up your rose garden. . . ." The letters flamed past her faster now, insistent, crowding, overlapping each other in their electric intensity. ". . . Cold and ruthless society . . . fear of darkness, of thinking, of living . . . of dying . . . it takes real courage . . . all the nows of all the tomorrows to regret . . . warm river . . . understand . . . your loneliness warms the coldness I die in . . ." There was a sequence, an irrefutable revelation of order in the burning rush.

A faint suggestion of a clear, pastel light nuzzled the East when Anne carefully unbuttoned her long, black raincoat and let it fall to her feet. Then, she swung herself over the railing and dropped quietly into the swift-flowing river.

THE FIRST LEAVING

To friends whom I have known
And loved
And am to know no more
I have smiled and said
Goodbye.

I stand here at the lonely bus stop,
Hair blown in the wind,
Wandering in the whorls
Of a transit ticket world,
Cursing its lying pinkness
As my nail scrapes down the ridges
On its grey and widening edge.

"We will see you again?"
"Someday . . ."

While this wind
Is whisper-cold,
I wonder. Will this be
My world
From now
Till somewhere?

—Elaine Verbicky

The Bleeding Pulp

Anybody wha doubts that literary taste is a pretty arbitrary and subjective phenomenon should try editing a magazine same-time. The last issue of Pulpinside contained nathing that didn't find bath friends and faes in bewilderingly equal propartians. I suppose uniformity of taste would be a Bad Thing, manatanaus and undemacratc and so farth, but I must confess that there have been times in the last twa manths when I've wished far just a bit mare concensus, a bit af reassurance that there's same sart af camman ground between ane reader and the next sa that discussion is at least possible.

After pralanged saul-searching (my saul is such a mess that it takes me a lang time ta find anything in it), I think I've came up with the perfect starting-paint far discussions about the magazine, one propositian that na-ane can passibly dispute and that applies ta each and every thing appearing between these cavers:

EVERYTHING PRINTED IN PULPIN-
SIDE IS BAD!

Gat that?

After all, the dear people wha write far us are generally fairly yaung; they haven't written much yet; they haven't experienced much yet; they haven't even read all that much yet. All these are perfectly gaad reasons far their stuff being generally lausy.

And if it were really gaad, they wauldn't be having it printed in these squalid pages; they'd be publishing in The Atlantic and Encounter ar at least the Tamarack Review.

• • •

So where daes that leave us? Is the idea af a campus magazine simply stupid?

I dan't think sa, because, in the end I dan't think aur magazine is dull. Full af garbage, certainly; but confess, dan't you lave plaughing through the garbage ta find the gems? And isn't the garbage amusing?

Furthermore, I must insist that the question af whether Stary A is Gaod ar Bad is immensely less interesting than the question af what's happening inside Stary A: what's gaing wrang, maybe even what's gaing right, and why.

The cantents af this magazine aren't being affered ta yau as faultless artifacts fresh from the master-craftsman's farge. They're imperfect, sometimes infuriatingly sa. But if yau take them far what they are, and laak at them a bit mare closely, suddenly they're quite interesting, maybe even slightly beautiful.

Which is, I hape, saying a lat.

• • •

This is a fat issue. **Eric Schachter** has illustrated his awn stary, which is ane af a sequence . . . **Elan Galper** is studying medicine, but has written a great deal; a shart version af ane af his plays, "The Three Daysy", appeared twa years ago in Inside and was praduced at the Yardbird Suite . . . **Leona Gom** appears twice in this issue. Every year ane especially interesting new writer turns up: twa years ago it was me, a year ago it was Charles Nable, and naw Leana. "The River" runs purple in places, but its architecture is very saund . . . **Lawson Gillmic** writes wild stuff; after living with "Symphany" far a few manths I like it mare and mare . . . **Jim Davies** takes his place among the great daggerel-writers; daggerel is an ancient and hanarable made af narratian, and I dan't expect ta see a better bit af narrative verse an a local theme far some time . . . **Shirley Neumann** and **Jim Litchfiel** da wildly different things with the shart-shart prase farm; what I like about Shirley's fable is its merciless logic, and Jim's piece has an add logic af its awn. Guess which Nated Campus Figure's prase it paradies! . . . **Christina van Loon** and **Elaine Verbicky** are, like Jim Litchfield, in their first year here. Chris is interested in African studies, Elaine in The Gateway: Gad have mercy an their sauls!
